MARVEL 002

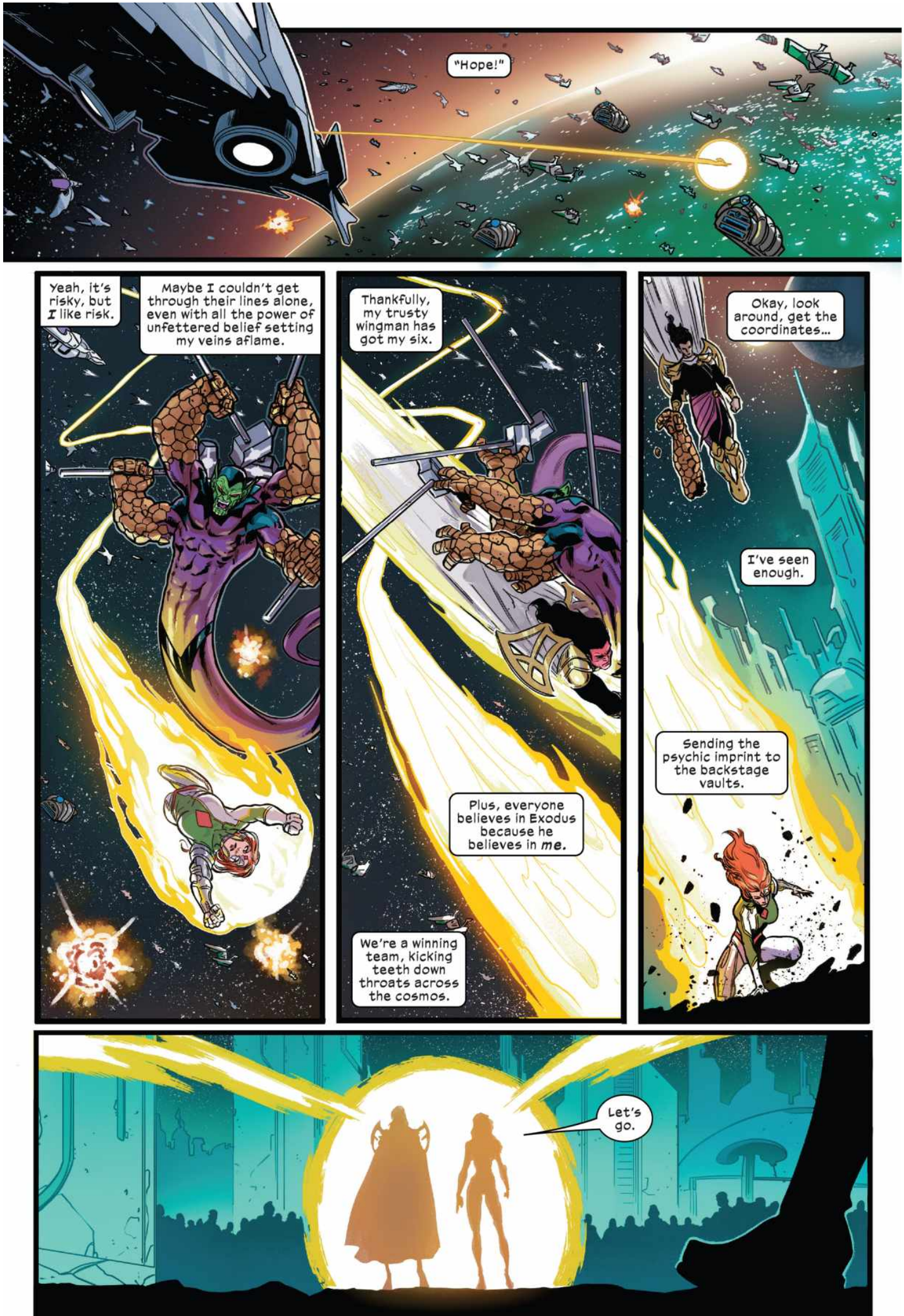
SINS OF SINISTER

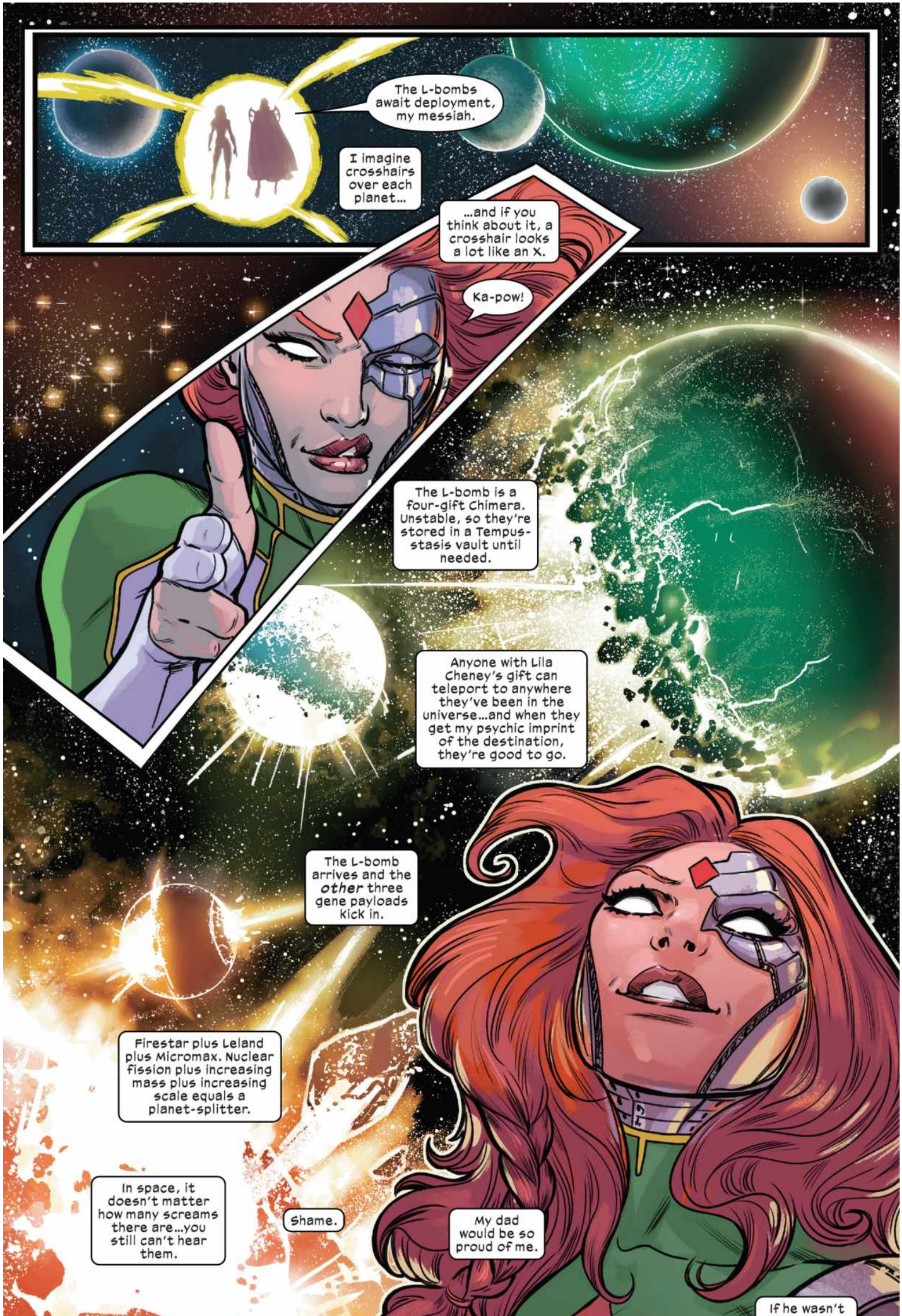
[part_] [__VI_]

GILLEN
DI VITO
CHARALAMPIDIS

IMMORAL X-MEN

+100, the Edge of the Pax.
The remains of the Compact are making another stand. The Kree-Skrulls and the Rigellians are holding together, even after the Shi'ar splintered.
So: fortress solar systems. Millennia of weapon production line up and points at us.
Adorable.
So, yeah, it is a well-defended system.
The good news? It contains nothing we need.
Still--the Supreme Intelligence is blocking the sector from far-viewing.
Can't deploy the L-bombs and pop them until we've got eyes on the ground...
...thankfully, I'm getting itchy feet and want to get some action.
Hope to fleet.
Who do you believe in?
The word bursts out on the speakers.
The word most feared across the


"Hope!"
Yeah, it's risky, but I like risk.
Maybe I couldn't get through their lines alone, even with all the power of unfettered belief setting my veins aflame.
Thankfully, my trusty wingman has got my six.
Plus, everyone believes in Exodus because he believes in me.
We're a winning team, kicking teeth down throats across the cosmos.
Okay, look around, get the coordinates...
I've seen enough.
Sending the psychic imprint to the backstage vaults.
Let's go.


The L-bombs await deployment, my messiah.
I imagine crosshairs over each planet...
...and if you think about it, a crosshair looks a lot like an X.
Ka-pow!
The L-bomb is a four-gift Chimera. Unstable, so they're stored in a Tempus-stasis vault until needed.
Anyone with Lila Cheney's gift can teleport to anywhere they've been in the universe...and when they get my psychic imprint of the destination, they're good to go.
The L-bomb arrives and the *other* three gene payloads kick in.
Firestar plus Leland plus Micromax. Nuclear fission plus increasing mass plus increasing scale equals a planet-splitter.
In space, it doesn't matter how many screams there are...you still can't hear them.
Shame.
My dad would be so proud of me.
If he wasn't

OUR SIDE IS GENOCIDE.

One hundred years have passed since Mister Sinister gained control over mutantkind by using clones of Moira MacTaggert clones as "save points" and embedding his own DNA into the resurrection process, beginning with the members of the Quiet Council.

And it's been one hundred years since Mister Sinister has lost control over the timeline when his Moira-engine was stolen -- stranding him in a hell of his own making. With no other choice, Sinister has bent to the whims of his own creations, all while trying to secretly recover his Moira clones and reset the timeline.

But surrounded by other Sinisters...is one ever truly safe?

[MISTER SINISTER]

[RASPUTIN IV]

[HOPE]

[EXODUS]

[MOTHER RIGHTEOUS]

SINS OF SINISTER

YEAR 100

IMMORAL X-MEN

PART 6 : "FOUR-LETTER WORDS"

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COMMANDER'S LOG.

The Compact is wheezing along but not for much longer. We're a long way from those early days. +33 was their best shot. Rigellians and the Kree-Skrulls against Krakoa...but just them.

I can imagine Emperor Dorrek looking at the map of the galaxy now and screaming. Greeny was right. If the Shi'ar got on board back then, they could have torn us out at the root. Instead, Xavier threw enough birdseed around and we got Shi'ar neutrality. Oops. Big mistake. I imagine them wincing over that one every time we popped a super-terraformer.

Yeah, Dorrek has every right to say "I told you so," but it's hard to say anything when you're a smear of atoms across half a dozen solar systems, right?

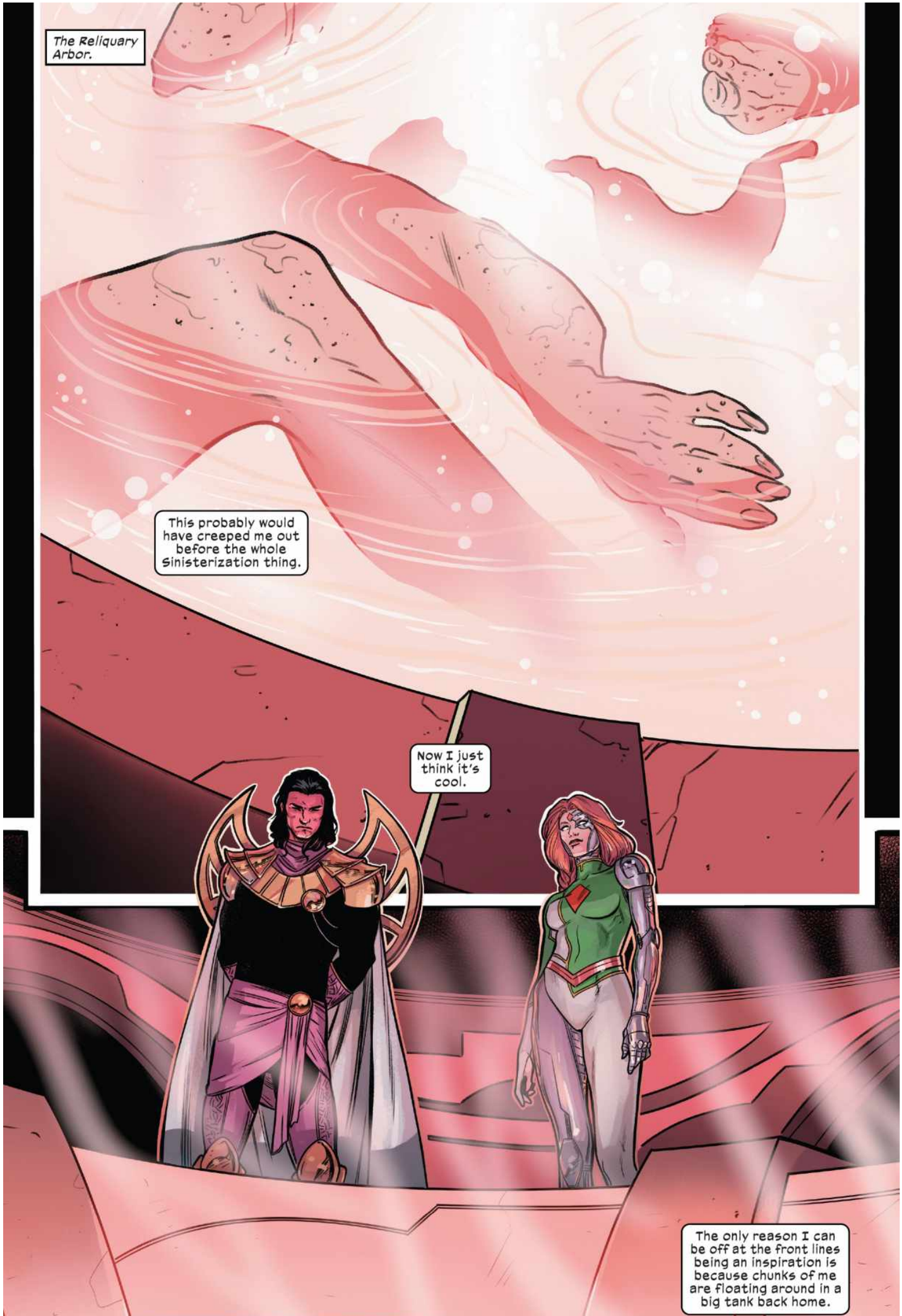
Shi'ar joined in circa +50 when they realized how badly they'd been played. Everyone else did too: Chitauri, Rebel Skrulls, Badoon, the lot. The Compact was at its strongest...but we were ready.

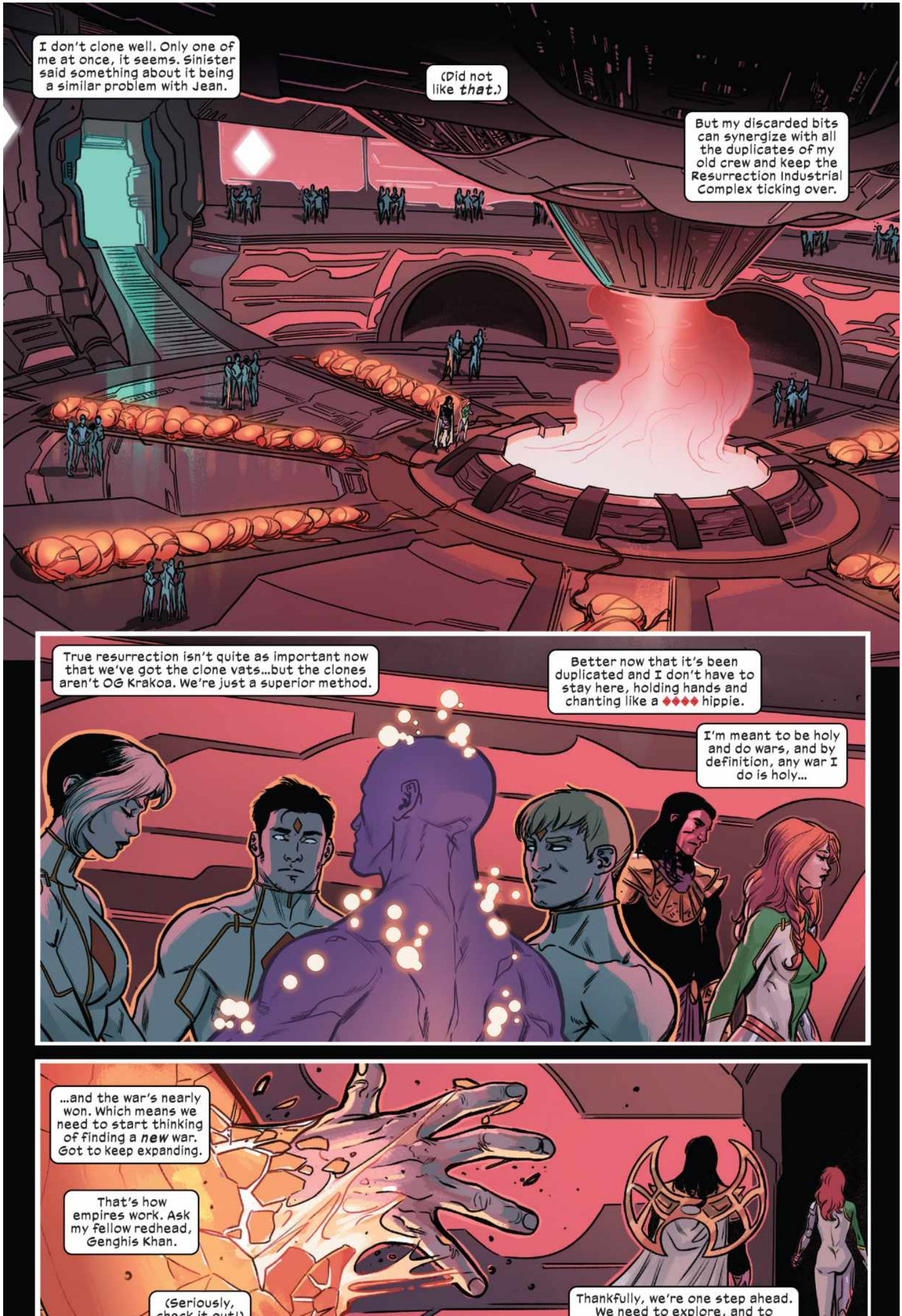
I figure by +120, it'll all be over. Resistance won't be any more than Storm's guerrillas.

Hey -- yet more good news. We still can't get ahold of Storm, but I hear we cornered Freedom Force. We finally got Mystique, the little traitor. Shape-change? How about shape-changing into a corpse, right?

There's just something about killing Quiet Council members. Hope it doesn't awaken anything. ;)

Commander Hope
19th of Frost
+100 New Krakoan Calendar


The Reliquary Arbor.
This probably would have creeped me out before the whole Sinisterization thing.
Now I just think it's cool.
The only reason I can be off at the front lines being an inspiration is because chunks of me are floating around in a big tank back home.

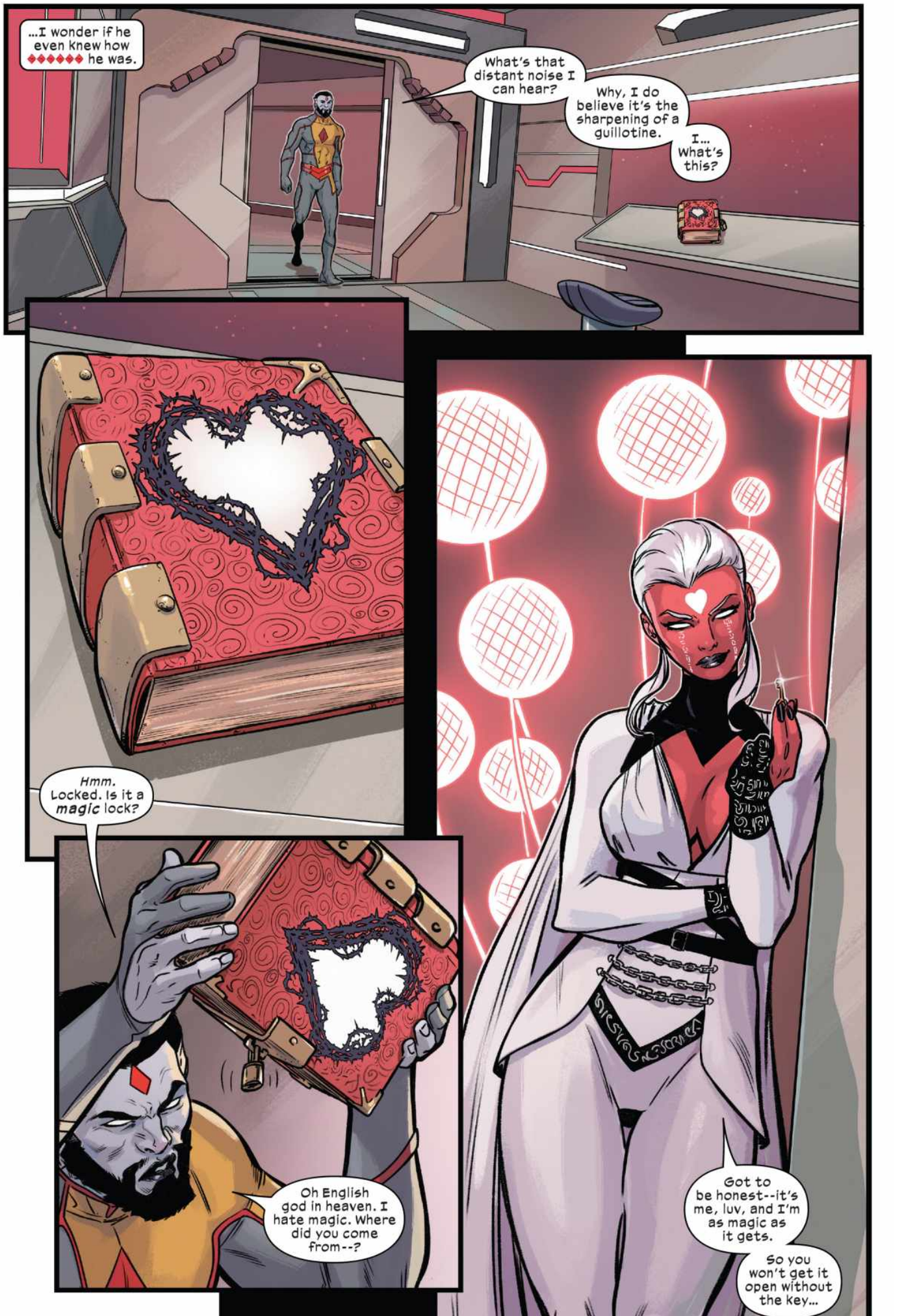

I don't clone well. Only one of me at once, it seems. Sinister said something about it being a similar problem with Jean.
(Did not like *that*.)
But my discarded bits can synergize with all the duplicates of my old crew and keep the Resurrection Industrial Complex ticking over.
True resurrection isn't quite as important now that we've got the clone vats...but the clones aren't OG Krakoa. We're just a superior method.
Better now that it's been duplicated and I don't have to stay here, holding hands and chanting like a ♦♦♦♦ hippie.
I'm meant to be holy and do wars, and by definition, any war I do is holy...
...and the war's nearly won. Which means we need to start thinking of finding a *new* war. Got to keep expanding.
That's how empires work. Ask my fellow redhead, Genghis Khan.
(Seriously, check it out!)
Thankfully, we're one step ahead. We need to explore, and to

...the *Marauder*. A state-of-the-art piece of mutant tech.
Ignore the shiny surface. Beneath the metal, we've got huge Shaw batteries, Unus glands, a Tempus-Magik drive bio-substrate...
The *Marauder* will get out there and find new worlds, strange civilizations...
...and phone home so we can come and annihilate them.
She's a beauty.
Crew ready?
Let's say I've whipped them into shape myself.
They will follow orders unquestioningly.
Good. Then we need one more thing.
The Captain. Nathaniel?
She's ready.
Sinister looks worried, which is always nice.
It's good to see him

S-Lab XXVI.
He should be. Churning out better and better gene tech is the only reason he's still part of our utopia.
Mystique-Greycrows! Give us some Kree and Skrull weaponry. The whole coalition of the willing assembly look. And...
Yes, fantastic. A+. Applause all around.
Now, my council peers...
...let me present the latest generation of Chimera.
...Rasputin IV!
Time to show off, my girl!
Yes, sir.

Rasputin IV is stable. With five genes, that's proved nearly impossible.
Most fives just detonate before you can even throw them into a Tempus vault.
Hmm. Rasputin IV. What happened to I through III?
As I said. Five-genes are tricky. They may have been stable, but they were unsuitable for the position of captain and hero.
Rasputin IV is very good.
Great. What's the gene payload?
A couple of our council members provide the base-- Piotr and Kate are a very stable couple, and steel, strength and intangibility are all classics.
A taste of Unus adds some force-fields, and I splashed in a little Kinney for aggression and survivability.
Plus? I managed to get an actual Omega-telepath gene in there. We know the problems with the Grey strain, but Quire is more malleable...
For the Pax!
...and on the equipment side, a Soulsword.
It was hard to get ahold of, but a weapon you can attack with while remaining intangible has obvious charms.

When all is conquered, all will be at peace!
How quaint.
Does she really believe that?
She does. She's good in every way. You need a hero in the captain role.
She's such a powerhouse. We need to make sure she won't backstab the council when she's off on her own.
How did I do, sir?
Magnificent. Just magnificent.
Take a down cycle to prepare. You'll be off in the field soon, saving the universe...
So, what's next on your list?
Can you do six gifts?
No. Not even as disposable weapons. Five is as far as we can go.
That's a shame. Nice work, Sinister. Cool-looking captain! Didn't think you had it in you.
We all could read the subtext...
...I just went and said it.
You know, I think someone just said they're of no use to us anymore.
I believe so.
The Quiet Council just abhors dead-weight.
Nathaniel has provided all he can to the dream.
Good. The only reason I could bear him on the council this long was the knowledge that one day I could tie the warlock to a stake and set him ablaze.
So that was it. After a century


...I wonder if he even knew how ♦♦♦♦♦♦ he was.
What's that distant noise I can hear?
Why, I do believe it's the sharpening of a guillotine.
I... What's this?
Hmm. Locked. Is it a *magic* lock?
Oh English god in heaven. I hate magic. Where did you come from--?
Got to be honest--it's me, luv, and I'm as magic as it gets.
So you won't get it open without the key...

You're...
...who are you?
Answer's in the book.
What's in the book?
Answer's in the book.
Coming out of the shadows, being ominous and hinting at a bigger story?
My dear, I *invented* that game.
Did you?
Answer's in the book...
...and if you want the key?
Mother Righteous just wants a *thank-you.*
Thank you.
Have fun, ducky.

You're a man of science, and you're expecting an abstract. But I'm a lady of magic, and that means you're going to get a story. So, are you sitting comfortably? Let us begin.

Once upon a time, there was a man called Nathaniel Essex.

He saw that eventually, machines with big brains would destroy us all because they're good at thinking. Can't be having that.

He died but left behind four clones. Each of the clones would explore one route to best the machines. They are...

- The Cosmic Powers -- that's Orbis Stellaris. You don't know him, but he's a big weirdo who floats through the cosmos in a golf ball full of his own pee.
- Post-humanity -- that's Doctor Stasis. You know him, but don't worry, I offed him when he gave me a bit of lip.
- Magic -- that's me! Mother Righteous, at your service.
- Essex Factors -- that's you.

Now, where this gets interesting. Different roads, same destination. To survive the machines, we have to escape the machines: If you become a dominion, outside time and space, they can't touch you. No one can.

Yeah, I know that's what you're shooting at. We all are. Or were, in the case of poor, old, stroppy Stasis.

So...can we beat the machines and ascend to a higher form of life? And just as importantly: Can we beat each other? Because there's only room for one top dog in this game.

And it's going to be me.

To be continued...

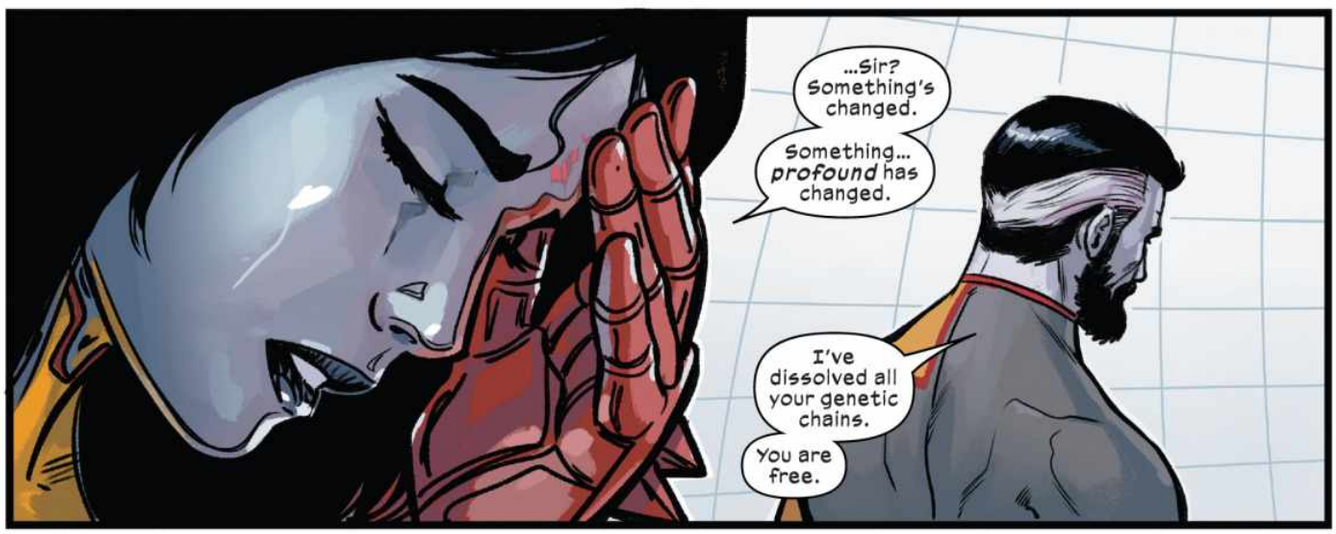
So, how's your big existential crisis going, gene-brother?
Please. Whether it's true or not, it doesn't matter.
I'm the real one. Sinister was born of the diamond via Apocalypse. I remember that...
What you're saying is true. It's a race...but it's *always* been a race.
It was me against the awful A.I.
Now it's against...you and the other impostors.
And "thank you"? Please. Whatever you're trying, it won't work in the long run. Magic is basically nonsense.
Glad we agree. Lots of nonsense in the world, and a clever girl can use it in clever ways. Think about this...
...everything *you* do, you do it with DNA. The base pairs. Just four letters.
ACTG.
I work with *26*.
Toddle-pips, hun.
This does change everything. I can use this...but I need my Moiras to *really* use it.
And I need them before the council crushes me.
Oh, Nathaniel. What did you do to deserve *this?*
I kept on imagining Sinister's head exploding. He was the first villain I shot when I was an X-Man. I shuddered then. Now when I think of it, I shiver in delight.
I am grateful. Sinister made me stronger. Now I make him dead.
Life's a bitch, and then she shoots you

We agreed to move on Sinister after we crushed another warren of Chitauri pirate worlds.
Hey, fleet?
Who's the ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆ best?
The cry almost burns out the speakers.
Mutant voices, raised in angry prayer.
I know that using the same tactic is always a risk...
...but the risk makes it exciting.
Yeah, eventually, someone will find a counter...
...but not yet.
Okay. Witnessed and message sent.

Exodus?
Where the ◆◆◆◆ are you, Exodus?
Far enough away.
You duplicate my power.
I am not with you--you are just a girl with a gun.
You are of no more use to the council...or your church. I *am* your church...and the church is bigger than you.
A messiah's purpose is to inspire a church... to pray that one day they will return.
That a messiah is with us diminishes them. It makes true faith impossible.
For who could *truly* believe in such a petulant, childish girl?
You are of more use to us dead than alive.

Until you come again, my messiah.
Exodus to the gene-sacristy: When her signals flatline, bring her back.
You will suffer pain for every drop of blood you miss.
Her corpse is precious and holy.
They come in cackling. They have no idea what's happened and can't believe their luck.
Seems they're going to get revenge for me head-shotting god knows how many solar systems.
I grit my teeth. I know I'll go down fighting...
...but I'm going to go down.
There's only one thing that's a comfort.
I may be first of

...but I won't be the last.
I'm proud of you, Rasputin. You're...a wonder. You really are my finest work. You'll do amazing things.
One last gene treatment and you're ready.
FZZZ


...Sir? Something's changed.
Something... *profound* has changed.
I've dissolved all your genetic chains.
You are free.

What do you mean?
Krakoa was a paradise, Rasputin.
I destroyed it.

You know Krakoa of today. Then, it wasn't an island of rotting fruit and vines. It was beaches, freedom, love.
Xavier's dream was a soft-edged thing--all pillows into which one could sink.
Emma thought children were to be cherished, not commanded.
It was the best thing that had ever happened to the world.

It went wrong. I made this strain, and it infected them all.
It turned them into these monsters, and I have been trapped in their service ever since.
I have seen them do such horrors... and it's all my fault.

There is a way back. I had a device. It was lost.
We can find it.
If we do, I can purge the strain, and we can have bright beaches. The universe need not be afraid ever again.

I have raised you to be good, as the universe needs a light.
You are a hero in a blighted world.
You alone are free. You alone can save us.

Save us all, Rasputin IV.
Save us from my

We can't do it alone.

The Marauder.
Captain on deck!
Launch immediately.
Marauder, you're not cleared to exit at this time.
I--
Proteus torpedoes, full spread.

Fire up the Magik-Tempus cores! Give me everything!
Warp factor X!

We're clear.
Where to now, sir?
To save the universe.
We find my lost treasure and we can undo all of this.
How long will the mission take, sir?
...Five years, I think.
Surely no more than five years.

SINS OF SINISTER CHECKLIST

YEAR 10

- SINS OF SINISTER #1
- STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #1
- NIGHTCRAWLERS #1
- IMMORAL X-MEN #1

YEAR 100

- NIGHTCRAWLERS #2
- IMMORAL X-MEN #2
- STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #2

YEAR 1000

- IMMORAL X-MEN #3
- STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #3
- NIGHTCRAWLERS #3
- ≠ SINS OF SINISTER: DOMINION #1

ZONE